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4. MULTINATIONAL CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE LANDSCAPE OF CONTEMPORARY POLAND

4.1. Introduction

Cultural heritage (*patrimoine culturel*) is a concept that has been expanding its range in recent years. It is considered to be an important factor in economic and social development, a means of searching for agreements in regions suffering from ethnic or religious conflicts and an expression of cultural diversity in various countries and regions all over the world. It is hard to disagree that respect for the past, the historical heritage, is one of the most important determinants of the level of culture of a society or a nation, the degree of its civilisation development. It has not only cultural and emotional dimensions, but also often translates into the concrete material benefits in the modern world.

Even though the concept of cultural heritage was formulated more than 100 years ago, it has been greatly expanded over time,

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gaining in importance in the last dozen years. Experts in the field note, that there are further objects that seem worth protecting, there is also the problem of selecting what the heritage includes, how to properly identify it and shape it so it becomes a memory of objects, qualities and places that reflect the widest possible social image. We need to remember that: "Cultural heritage is an object, an idea that originates in a specific reality, under certain conditions, based on historical principles of historical conditioning architectural and urban solutions. Cultural heritage should therefore represent the history of all social groups, even the ones that are marginal in a society. Only then will it be an important element for the development of awareness and knowledge of history, as well as a basis for the formulation of the concept of national consciousness. Therefore, no phenomenon can be selected and can have cultural heritage significance unless it is within the context of a historical narrative" (Lorenc-Karczewska and Witkowski 2002, p. 125). Given the complexity of the term, I. Lewandowska distinguishes the territorial reaches of cultural heritage, assuming that the core of what is meant by the term "cultural heritage" is "the legacy left by a nation or region in which we operate [...] because each of us is identified with some part of a given space, territory – whether your state, region, or a small local community. For them, heritage, a legacy of their ancestors, is that in which they participate (language, customs, historical traditions) and what they are experiencing by watching and reading (monuments, works of art, literature), or using (roads, bridges, equipment)" (Lewandowska 2007, p. 68). Therefore, we often do not realise that what surrounds us is a legacy of previous generations, so we are unable to appreciate and respect it.

4.2. The cultural landscape of Poland

Cultural heritage in a broad sense is a very important area of research. In the early post-war years in Poland, the need for historical and urban studies that were vital for the reconstruction

of urban areas destroyed during World War II became especially important. Researchers were ordered to use historical and conservation studies in developing local zoning plans. In 1951 the National Company for the Preservation of Historical Monuments (Przedsiębiorstwo Państwowe Pracownie Konserwacji Zabytków) was established. In addition to its basic tasks, such as the restoration and preservation of architectural monuments, it conducted historical and urban studies that lay at the foundation of the Polish conservation school. Since 1962, when Poland introduced a modern conservation law, these studies are a mandatory input material for the development of urban plans in historical areas. The number of these studies performed for most Polish cities was unique in the world (Paszkowski 2005). Owing to this and other activities, Poland experienced the development of an atmosphere of respect for the cultural heritage and a growing knowledge of values based on the historical legacy that shows the character of a given space. In this regard, objects of historical nature and exceptional locations are especially important.

The aim of this study is to present elements of the multinational cultural heritage in the landscape of contemporary Poland and Łódź, as well as to show the historical factors that shaped them.

We often do not realise the meaning of wealth of a given country, region or area. Reference can be provided by the UNESCO World Heritage List, updated annually, which includes the most valuable cultural and natural heritage sites. Right now, the UNESCO World Heritage List includes nearly 1000 sites in 160 countries (759 cultural, 193 natural and 29 of mixed cultural and natural character). 14 of them are located in Poland. These are: Auschwitz Birkenau Nazi concentration and extermination camp, Belovezhskaya Pushcha, Wooden orthodox churches in Polish and Ukrainian Carpathian region: Radruż, Chotyńiec, Smolnik, Turzańsk, Powroźnik, Owczary, Kwiaton, Brunary Wyżne, Centennial Hall in Wrocław, Cracow's historic centre, Warsaw's historic centre, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska: mannerist architectural and landscape complex and pilgrimage

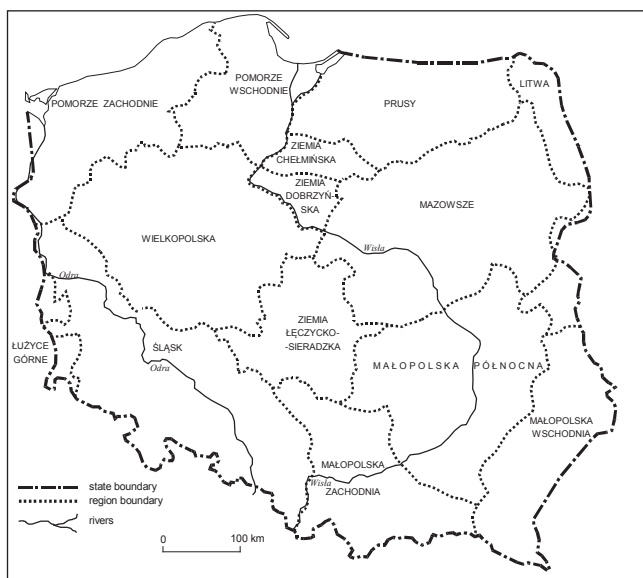
park, wooden churches of southern Little Poland: Binarowa, Blizne, Dębno, Sękowa, Haczów, Lipnica Murowana, churches of Peace in Jawor and Świdnica, Royal Salt Mines in Wieliczka and Bochnia, Medieval town of Toruń, Muskauer Park, Old Town in Zamość and Malbork Castle.

It would appear that it is not much, considering the history and role played by Poland in the history of Europe. The cultural heritage of Poland, located right in the centre of Europe, is its unique history and cultural landscape shaped over hundreds of years. Contemporary Poland is relatively uniform, both in terms of ethnicity and religion. The situation was completely different in the past. The complicated history of Poland made it an example of the greatest territorial variety in European history (Figure 4.1). These changes involved not only the temporary gaining and losing some provinces that were later regained (as was the case for most European countries), but a transition of the country from its natural geographical frames deep into neighbouring ecumenes, while losing its own historical borders in the process. There were also times when the Polish state would disappear from the map of Europe for extended periods. This often results in complications in determining the ownership of the multicultural and multiethnic heritage of many Polish cities and regions. It should also be added that Polish cultural heritage can be found outside its borders as well, e.g. in today's Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine and Russia. Many moving artefacts have been looted by the invaders during the wars that took place in our area in the past. Many of them have unfortunately never been recovered.

Over most of its history, Poland was a multiethnic and multicultural country. In the modern landscape, we can find relics of Medieval settlements based on German law and German colonists commemorated in checker-board urban layouts with centrally located main square, as well as the legacy of Jewish merchants, Tartars and Armenians (Figure 4.2).



A. Changes in Polish territory from the late 10th century to the mid-20th century

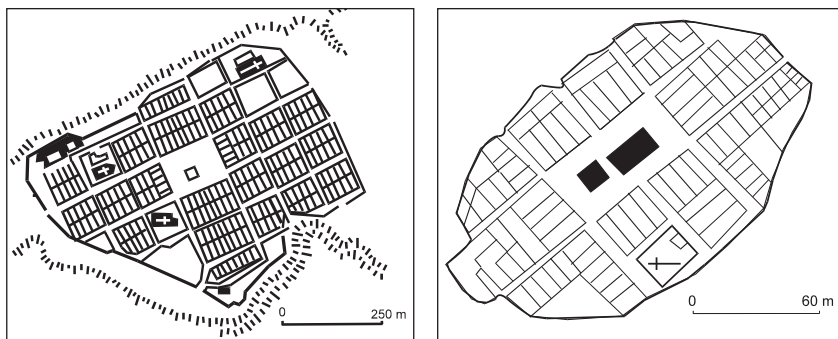


B. Division of Poland into historical regions

Figure 4.1. The territory of the Polish state from 10th century to the early 21st century

Source: M. Koter

In modern times of the so-called First Republic, multiculturalism became a distinctive feature characteristic for this state and included in its name – Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569–1795). The dual character of the state that consisted of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania does not only concern Polish history, but also shows that Lithuania was an equal partner and exists in the history of many other nations – Ukrainians, Belarusians, as well as Baltic nations living within its borders and now inhabiting their own states in Central and Eastern Europe. The number of Poles and Ruthenians in Poland at that time was almost equal (approx. 5 million), with a Lithuanian population of 1 million. Latvians, Germans and Jewish populations were other important minorities, with the latter existing in Poland since time immemorial as one of the biggest populations in Europe. It obviously left permanent marks on the modern cultural landscape with cemeteries, churches of different denominations, monuments and places special to each minority.



A. Plan of Chełmno in the 13th century B. Plan of Paczków in the 14th century

Figure 4.2. Typical layout of the medieval town of tracking in Poland

Source: S. Bobiński (1975)

The Commonwealth also had a rich tradition of religious tolerance, acting as an “island of peace” in the map of religious wars in Europe in the 16th and early 17th centuries. It was a very important

place for European reformation, as Lutheranism, Calvinism and Arianism were gladly accepted. Furthermore, in 1570 the Polish Protestants entered into the first ever act of ecumenism – the so-called Sandomierz Agreement, while a 1573 decree of the Parliament granting freedom of religion to the nobility became one of the foundations that were unconditionally accepted by each newly chosen king. This allowed the Commonwealth to avoid religious wars, establish religious tolerance and become a safe haven for Protestants from all over Europe – “a country without stakes”. Unfortunately, religious tolerance for Protestants did not last long. At the end of the first half of 17th century, Counter-Reformation tendencies prevailed and Polish Arians were exiled in 1658 and prohibited from changing their Catholic denomination under the threat of death penalty. With the growing importance of Counter-Reformation, the Protestants in the Commonwealth started leaving the continent more and more often, like their counterparts in Western Europe. The attitude towards Eastern Borderlands also changed. The strong influence of the Orthodox Church, policy failures and the failure to utilise the multiculturalism of this part of the country were some of the causes that lead to the partitions of late 18th century.

Reborn in 1918, the Second Republic was also a multinational and multidomination state. However, multiculturalism has taken on new meaning and character. The presence of national minorities (Ukrainians, Belarusians, Jews, Germans) in politics was not accepted by the nationalist parties. In the 1930s, ethnic minorities fell victim to the nationalists proclaiming anti-Semitic and racist slogans. The problem was important, since the Polish population was only two-third of the Second Republic. In some regions – mainly in the eastern part of the country – Poles were a minority in relation to the Ukrainians, Belarusians and Lithuanians. The Jewish population was concentrated in smaller cities, where they were often more than half of the population. In Warsaw, they exceeded one-third of the population, which made the city the second largest

(after New York) concentration of Jewish population in the world. Large concentrations of German minority formed in the western part of the country.

After World War II, when Polish borders moved in 1945, the former multinational and multicultural Poland became a national and religious monolith. Apart from this, a conscious policy of eradicating diversity was conducted by Polonising surnames and weakening the few existing minorities. For example, Ukrainians were spread throughout the country just after the war as part of Operation Vistula, and the anti-Semitic campaign of 1968 resulted in the exile of the few Jews that were left in Poland following the Holocaust. A return to multiculturalism became possible after 1989, when democratic rules were introduced, and after 2004 when Poland joined the European Union, which allowed Poles to live anywhere in the EU and other people to come and live in Poland.

Therefore, contemporary Poland is a country, whose cultural heritage was formed over the centuries by Poles, as well as people and communities of different ethnic origin, who (for better or for worse) permanently influenced its history. For example, the first patron saint of Poland, Saint Adalbert, was Czech, the patron saint of Silesia is Saint Hedwig of Germany, and the recently canonised Jadwiga of Poland was in fact Hungarian. The mother of the Piast dynasty, Dobrava, was a compatriot of Saint Adalbert, while the most powerful dynasty to rule Poland was created by Lithuanian Jagiellonians. Renaissance was “brought in” to Poland from Italy by queen Bona, wars with Swedes were caused by the Swedish House of Vasa, while the downfall of the state and its partition was largely orchestrated by the Saxon Wettins.

In addition to them, Polish history saw numerous other more or less famous characters, who left their big or small mark, while leaving many places that became important, not only for Poles. Today, these places belong to both Polish and non-Polish cultures, serving as important fragments of Polish and European cultural heritage and a deposit of the latter within Polish borders. Let us recall some

of them. Germans left some significant traces. The reason is well-known. Western and northern areas of contemporary Poland were included within its borders after 1945, hence the preserved traces of many centuries of former affiliation with Germany. There are still monuments and places that influenced the history of this region in various ways, such as palaces and castles, cities and towns with characteristic architecture and layouts, monuments commemorating German soldiers killed in World Wars I and II, wartime cemeteries, temples, as well as the ruins of the famous Wolf's Lair in Gierłoża near Kętrzyn, one of Hitler's quarters and the site of the most famous attempt on Hitler's life by Claus von Stauffenberg on 20th July 1944. Many German artefacts relate to German culture and science. The Martin Luther square in Bielsko-Biała, the capital of Polish Protestantism, has the only statue of Luther in Poland, built in 1900. In Lower Silesia and Lubusz Land, there are traces of several Nobel Prize winners – 1912 literary Nobel Prize winner Gerhart Hauptmann's villa where he died in 1946 is located near Szklarska Poręba, while his grave is in the town itself. Robert Koch, who discovered the tubercle bacilli and the bacteria that cause cholera, worked as a doctor in Wolsztyn for over 10 years. Today, there is a Chamber dedicated to his memory. Silesia also has several unique objects, such as the 17th-century Evangelical Church of Peace in Świdnica, one of only two in Poland (the other one is in Jawor), left after the 30-year war. Many fortifications, castles, monasteries and strongholds were preserved in Warmia and Mazury (former Prussia). Many are impressive in size. Undoubtedly the most interesting and most valuable of these is the defensive complex of the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order in Malbork, one of the largest such complexes in Europe, with fortified walls surrounding an area of over 20 ha (Photo 4.1). We should also mention the city, which gave its name to one of the Medieval units of measurement and a municipal law, namely Kulm. The Międzyrzeczki Fortified Region is much more recent – a relic of World War II. A few dozen meters underground there are 30 km of corridors with preserved railway tracks and stations.



Photo 4.1. Castle in Malbork
Source: phot. by Ł. Musiaka



Photo 4.2. Orthodox Church
in Kostomłoty
Source: phot. by A. Rykała

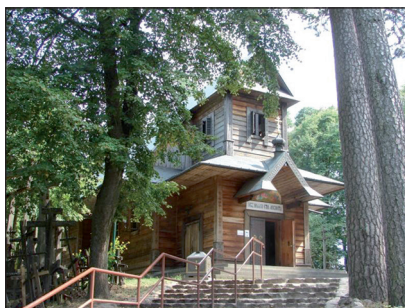


Photo 4.3. Orthodox Church
in Grabarka
Source: phot. by A. Rykała

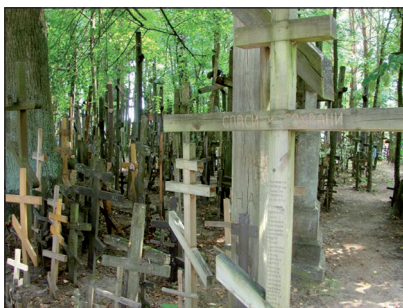


Photo 4.4. Crosses at St. Mount
Grabarka
Source: phot. by A. Rykała

There are also many Scandinavian traces in Poland. One of the most interesting and least known is the sarcophagus of the Duke of Pomerania Eric I, who served as the king of Denmark, Sweden and Norway, in a church in Darłowo in Pomerania. Warsaw has a column commemorating Sweden's Sigismund III Vasa who became famous for moving the capital from Cracow to Warsaw. Another object worth mentioning is the Wang temple in Karpacz, brought to Poland in mid-19th century. It is the only example of Norwegian-style

church in Poland and this part of Europe. Significant traces were also left by the Czechs. Also in Silesia, near Kudowa in Czeremna, Fr. Vaclav Tomaszek, created one of three Skull Chapels in Europe (along with Rome and Kutna Hora in the Czech Republic), which includes 24 000 skulls and bones, while in Żelów near Łódź, the descendants of Czech settlers fleeing religious persecution who found shelter here are preserving the language, customs and religion. Along the eastern border of the country, where cultures and religions interact, many traces of Orthodox Christianity were preserved, with sacred Grabarka mountain and centres of Belarusian minority in Bielsko Podlaskie, Hajnówka, Białowieża and Narew (Photos 4.2–4.4). The Lemko and Boyko people left churches in Komańcza, Turzańsk and other places. Jews left a few cemeteries and synagogues. Fortresses built in the 18th and 19th centuries are clearly visible in today's Polish cultural landscape. They were built by Prussians, Russians (Osowiec, meant to defend the crossing of the river Biebrza, Aleksandrowska Citadel in Warsaw), Austrians (Przemyśl – the third largest of the 200 built in Europe) and the French (Modlin on the right bank of the Vistula River and Zamość). Undoubtedly, the prime examples of defensive architecture are the strongholds in Srebrna Góra and Kłodzko, dating back to mid-18th century and once forming a chain to defend the borders of Silesia. We can find traces of people coming to Poland, not only our neighbours. In Białystok area, there are two clusters of Tartars. Their ancestors who fought the Battle of Vienna in 1683 were given land where they still live (Kruszyniany and Bohoniki) for their struggle and faithfulness to the Commonwealth. Mennonites came from the Netherlands for similar reasons to Czechs and Fillipians. Persecuted for their faith, they accepted the invitation from the Polish king and settled in Żuławy, starting Hauländer settlements in depressed areas. After World War II, they were expelled from Poland as Germans. They left their houses, windmills and cemeteries. It is worth mentioning that their global meetings take place every couple of years in Żuławy.

4.3. The cultural landscape of Łódź

Of course, the above examples of cultural heritage are of interest to Polish researchers. For obvious reasons, the representatives of the geographical centre in Łódź are mainly interested in the cultural heritage of the region of Łódź and Central Poland, paying less attention to other areas of Poland (Koter et al. 2000). Studies done by researchers in Łódź, working mainly at two units of the Faculty of Political Geography and Regional Studies at the University of Łódź, Historical Geography and Cultural Heritage, and Political Geography, contradict the widely held belief concerning the poverty of the cultural landscape of this region, its flatness caused by the dynamic industrialisation of the 19th century. In fact, this area (present Łódź province) is not fully uniform and devoid of internal diversity. The variable historical past of this area on one hand and the dynamic development of some industrial cities in the 19th century on the other caused significant internal diversification of the region, which found its reflection in its cultural landscape. Above all, we should remember the specificity of settlement processes in the area. They were different from other Polish regions. This was due in part to the physiographic conditions. Watersheds and large river valleys at the outskirts resulted in the earliest settlements down in the valley, later spreading to the uplands in the centre. Hence, it is difficult to point to uniform spatial arrangements characteristic of the whole area. Also important for the development of this region is its location at the borders of several historical areas (Wielkopolska, Kujawy, Mazowsze, Silesia), as well as its considerable distance from the historical centres of cultural and economic activity. Depending on the intensity of the influence of individual regions, areas with distinct cultural characteristics developed, while in other areas where these influences were weaker, strong, distinct characteristics are generally lacking. Intense industrial development noticeable in the central towns of the area since the beginning of the 19th century was also highly influential. It resulted in considerable environmental transformations and significant changes in spatial development intensity.

One of the most important, and certainly the most visible elements of the cultural landscape are the historical spatial arrangements and the architecture of the cities. Some urban centres located in the area have a very long history. The first mentions of some of them date back to the end of 11th and 12th centuries. They can be clearly seen in fully or partially preserved pre-charter arrangements that in many cases survived or were included in the new urban layouts brought about by the 13th and 14th-century German law colonisation. These valuable relics of Medieval urban planning were especially well-preserved in Wieluń, Bolesławiec, Łask and Wolbórz. Preserved cross-shaped urban layouts with a central square are uniquely valuable. The most treasured of them, almost untouched by time, can be found in Sieradz, Uniejów and Łęczyca (an almost exemplary specimen). It is worth noting that a certain group of local cities derives its origins from the towns, whose relics in the form of fortified settlements can be found all over the province. Being the oldest elements of the historical cultural scape, these relics date back to the 6th–13th centuries and are situated in riverside areas and hard-to-reach locations such as Tum, Żarnów and Sieradz. A separate group of clearly distinctive urban layouts are former factory settlements dating back to the beginning of industrialisation in the area (e.g. in Łódź, Zgierz, Ozorków, Aleksandrów and Konstantynów) (Wojtkiewicz and Kulesza 2011). To this day, they are the central historic core. They still include preserved building complexes, sadly not always forming a coherent 19th-century urban landscape (it is relatively well-preserved in Łódź, Aleksandrów and Konstantynów, but the situation is worse in Pabianice and Zgierz). Especially notable is the multicultural character of Łódź, recently and rightfully rediscovered, which surprised and amazed the citizens of our country for a long, long time.

For many years, due to a lack of serious scientific studies, readers had to rely on stereotypical opinions about the people of Łódź. Certain historical circumstances resulted in not only Poles by also some German settlers make industrial careers and contribute to

the development of the city, which in turn attracted many Jewish merchants, entrepreneurs and craftsmen, who also had a hand in building the city. Industrialists and specialists from various western countries appeared, albeit not in such large numbers, followed after the fall of the uprising in 1863 by Russian military, officials and teachers. The creation of multicultural Łódź was a complex and long-lasting process. A broader knowledge of the history of Łódź, its architectural face and inhabitants was usually pretty vague. For a long time the majority of Poles, as well as many residents of the city itself, knew nothing about the early origins of Łódź, nor about the sources and determinants of its economic development and urban planning, nor, finally, about the people who created this city, expanded it, erected both important and beautiful works, filled it with diverse tissues of the economic, social and cultural values. It was not until the interwar period that the first, more modest scientific community formed and begun to explore and show the residents of Łódź the diverse facts and events from the history. These early scholars wrote about the so-called pre-industrial agricultural Łódź, about the creators of industrial Łódź, and the origins and development of industry in the city. They also wrote about the inhabitants and some distinguished representatives of Łódź, though usually German authors discussed the Germans, Jewish writers described Jews, and Polish ones wrote about Poles.

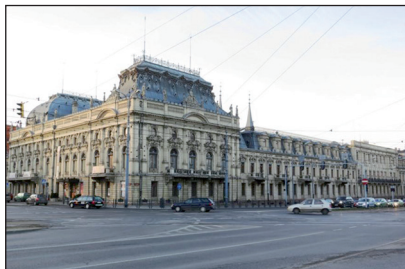


Photo 4.5. Piotrowska Street view of Wolności Square

Source: phot. by A. Araszkievicz



Photo 4.6. Palace of I.K. Poznański

Source: phot. by A. Araszkievicz



Photo 4.7–4.8. Manufaktura

Source: phot. by A. Araszkievicz

In the post-World War II period, after the experience of the occupation, and later as a result of anti-Zionist smear campaign in 1968, writing about the contribution of German and Jewish residents of Łódź to the development of the city was “non-political”. Changes occurred during the 1990s, when the long-gone historical Łódź was rediscovered. The projects started back then showed a completely different history of our city, especially highlighting the legacy of four cultures, Polish, Jewish, German and Russian, that quite recently (150 years ago) started building the industrial power of Łódź and allowed for building factories, temples of various denominations, hospitals, shelters, places of entertainment and leisure, and cemeteries despite any ethnic, religious and cultural differences. A city free of xenophobia was quickly created. The 1990s and early 2000s brought new studies of Łódź as a multicultural organism. Successful attempts at discussing the overall influence of multicultural community on the architecture of the city came, among others, from historians (M. Koter and M. Kulesza) and geographers (W. Puś and S. Pytlaś) from the University of Łódź, who published a study devoted to the influence of the multicultural cultural legacy of Łódź on the modern face of the city (Koter et al. 2005). The idea which inspired the authors was to look at Łódź as a city under a significant, often decisive influence of nationalities other than Poles, who largely defined its characteristic shape. This multinational heritage is an undeniable

proof of the openness, despite the absence of a state, characteristic to this part of Poland as compared with the outer world in 19th and early 20th century. This openness was most visible in Łódź, which for decades became an examples of peaceful coexistence of different ethnicities and religions, for whom it became not only “the promised land” but also a “home” with which they could identify. This had to leave and indeed left traces in the contemporary city. Łódź thus became an original and unique example of certain coming of age of European canons (Photos 4.5–4.8). The study focused on illustrating the material effects of various activities of inhabitants at the time that were reflected in the spatial arrangement of Łódź, its urban landscape, i.e. the placement and layouts of buildings constructed by them and structures of various functions, as well as on the assessment of their aesthetic and historic value. The most renowned and valuable objects of different functions were discussed: residential (tenements, villas, palaces), industrial, commercial (public buildings) and others. Information were given as to their location, time of construction, architectural form and historical value, as well as their role in the city as a whole and locally. The study mentions the names of investors and designers of these structures, representatives of different nations who most actively participated in creating the face of Łódź and all those interwoven factors that lay at the foundation of the enormous diversity of Łódź (Koter et al. 2005). Similar issues are discusses in two other works by M. Kulesza concerning the relics of multidenomination Łódź in the modern cultural landscape (2010) and the influence of the Protestants of Łódź on the city (2012), which stresses that representatives of other religions and ethnicities had a huge influence on the development of Łódź largely determined its distinctive shape.

The issues of religious minorities is within the research interests of A. Rykała. In his works, he discusses such issues as the material heritage of Jews as preserved in the contemporary cultural landscape of the province (2003, 2009a), the influence of multi-ethnic cultural heritage on contemporary cities in Central Poland (2006, 2009a), the Jewish sacral space of historic and current Łódź as illustrated by synagogues and prayer houses (2008, 2012b), as

well as the whole country (2012a), the cultural heritage of the Borderlands in modern Poland (2009b) and the general subject of religious minorities in Poland (2011a, b). The two latter works have been expanded into studies of the multinational cultural heritage of the Eastern part of the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania (Kaczyńska and Kulesza 2013) and the Eastern, Western, cosmopolitan – the influence of the multiethnic and multid denominational cultural heritage on the cultural landscape of Central Poland (Kulesza and Rykała 2013).

Another area of interest is the broadly defined cultural heritage of rural settlement in Central Poland (Kulesza and Koter 2006, Figlus 2009a, b, 2011). The area is dominated by serial villages – a remnant of the agrarian transformations in the Kingdom of Poland that followed the enfranchisement of peasants in 1864 and related to the construction of regular, linear state routes. Their buildings are located along such road, with all buildings usually standing on one side at certain distances from each other on strips of arable land perpendicular to the road. Such villages vary in length and can reach several kilometres. Old villages dating back to the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries, such as linear or oval villages are less popular. Valuable examples of the latter are Mieszki located within Łódź (Koter 1994) and Majkowice on Pilica River. Traces of the Medieval colonisation are also preserved in the names or parts of names of villages: Wola, Wólka, Wolica, Wolnica. One of the oldest villages in Łódź province is Spicymierz, located on Warta River near Uniejów – an early Medieval servant settlement of the nearby castellan's castle. It is also worth mentioning due to its unique custom of laying flower carpet of several metres before the Corpus Christi procession, which is a phenomenon of non-material folk culture. Haulander villages dating back to the 18th century are located mainly near Łęczyca and Sieradz and were established by settlers that came here to dry wetlands and forests. These are swampland serial villages or loose colonies with scattered single homesteads. To this day, some of their names include references to Haulander or Holland, thus showing their origin and original settlement character. After the partition of

the country in the late 18th and early 19th century there was a visible presence of German settlers, who left sparse spatial arrangements created as part of the Frederick's colonisation, such as the star-shaped Nowosolna, one of only three such arrangements in Poland, or the regular rectangle of Ksawerów on the border between Łódź and Pabianice, as well as regular serial and linear villages with brick buildings (Kulesza 2003).

Many castles can also be found in Łódź province. The best known is the castle in Łęczyca, erected in Gothic style in mid-14th century. The castle in Uniejów on Warta River dating back to the same time is also interesting. Unfortunately, most of the historic castles are now in ruins, with preserved fragments of walls and towers, traces of old moats or, far less frequently, full-height walls (as in the Gothic-Renaissance castle in Drzewica). Manors, the former seats of local gentry, are more common, while palaces are slightly less popular. The oldest buildings date back to the 16th century (Renaissance mansion in Pabianice) and the mid-18th century (Baroque wooden mansion in Ożarów from 1757). Unfortunately, manors in the area, mostly built in the 19th century, are in a very bad condition and in need of immediate renovation. The same applies to the parks surrounding them. Fortunately, the situation is different in case of palace complexes. For example, the Classicist-Baroque palace in Kamion or the impressive seat of the Radziwiłł family in Nieborów currently have a museum and scientific purpose.

The most valuable objects permanently inscribed into the cultural landscape of Central Poland include churches of different denominations and monasteries in all architectural styles. The oldest and the most valuable specimens undoubtedly include the Romanesque temples in Inowłódz (late 11th century), late Romanesque post-Cistercian monastery in Sulejów-Podklasztorze from late 12th century, Saint Wojciech church in Ruda Wieluńska from the same period or the late-Romanesque brick Saint Urszula church in Strońsk. They are all included in the European Romanesque Route. We also cannot forget the Romanesque stone basilica in Tum near

Łęczyca, erected in approx. 1145. Despite multiple restructuring, it kept its original Romanesque shape and is one of the most valuable historic object from this period in Poland. As far as Gothic temples are concerned, one should mention the post-Augustian church in Wieluń, the mid-14th century parish church in Warta or the post-monastery complex in Wielgomłyny. Examples of Baroque monasteries and churches are more numerous. The most renowned among them are the late-Baroque Fillipine monastery from the first quarter of the 18th century in Studzianna-Poświętne with its basilica, as well as the mid-18th century Franciscan monastery in Łagiewniki near Łódź. Classicist objects also date back to the end of this century. In the late 18th and early 19th century, a number of evangelical churches were also built with clear Classicist characteristics. One of the most interesting of them is the church in Nowosolna built in 1811. In the 18th and 19th centuries, many synagogues were also built, with their characteristic form complementing the cultural landscape of local towns. Unfortunately, few have survived to this day, and even these are in very poor condition. One of the few reconstructed synagogues is located in Inowłódz. A complex of a dozen or so small wooden churches in Łaszów, Popowice, Gaszyn, Kadłub and Wierzbie dating back to the 16th century is a very interesting example of sacral construction. Researchers include them in the Wieluń group of late-Gothic Greater Poland churches. They have characteristic short front towers (Lorenc-Karczewska and Witkowski 2002). Wooden churches from different periods are a typical element of the cultural landscape of the Łódź region. The vast majority of them date back to the 18th century and are very modest in form. Churches and monasteries often dominate the landscape, serving as mere “additions” to the remaining rural or urban development.

As far as public buildings are concerned, we should mention pretty well-preserved 19th-century inns, railway stations, often erected in the mansion style characteristic to the interwar period, hop and tobacco drying plants, old cemeteries and other ob-

jects. We also cannot forget the residential traditions of Spała, the summer resort of Russian Czars and the presidents of the Second Republic. The so-called small architecture, such as the roadside crosses, shrines and fences, is also very important for the regional style. The shrines and crosses located in the Pilica Natural Reserve complex are a typical individualised set in a given area. Wooden, monolithic crosses from Pilica or Żarnów area or shrines decorated with rich carved details, small brick pillar shrines with images of patron saints in Przedborze and surrounding areas are visible signs of local and national history. They also often mark routes, village borders and crossroads. Interestingly, they are usually the most durable elements of the landscape and, as magical places, they endure for centuries as constant reminders of long-gone times (Wypych 2001).

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the culture of Łódź province is characterised by certain struggle between the traditional forms of cultural landscape (related to agriculture) with urbanised landscape related to the agglomeration of Łódź. The expansion of the latter took place mainly along the access roads to Łódź. Therefore, there are still areas away from the main transport routes that developed more slowly, not giving in to the modernisation, where the remnants of the traditional cultural landscape still persist. Considering the values of the latter, most of the province is taken up by rural areas, mostly devoid of historic value or, as far as the degree of architectural and spatial transformations go, showing signs of degraded traditional cultural environment. This phenomenon, in addition to the spreading of worthless architectural trends known all over the country, also includes spatial chaos, which is also aggravated by the unsupervised expansion of holiday construction. Apart from creating positive examples of actions, these processes could be stopped by cultural parks formed for social, tourist and learning purposes, as well as scientific and teaching purposes, that would promote the preservation of unchanged landscape typical for this region, with its cultural and historical qualities (see Kurowski 2002).

4.4. Conclusions

It should also be noted that in recent years, we have been noticing the foreign influences and have not been bothered by the non-Polish elements. We can find as many foreign traces in Polish cultural landscape, as there are Polish elements all over Europe and often far away from it. Both are parts of the same world cultural heritage that is so hard to classify or include in just one culture. Poland has more than a 1000-year history of statehood, which left a number of marks in the land. Many of its historic buildings can be found in the UNESCO World Heritage List, which shows how influential cultures of different countries are on the overall European culture. The presence of many Polish monuments in the UNESCO list makes us proud, but also shows how countries unite and appreciate each other's heritage.

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